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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE: [REDACTED]

Appraisal of Content: 3.

1. The student strike on 6 February 1961 in Camaguey was partially successful, despite government threats to invalidate the year's work of students from the public schools who went on strike and to confiscate the property of parents of students in private schools. The authorities also threatened to confiscate the private schools at which students went on strike.¹ Despite these threats, almost all students in private schools and more than half of the students in many public schools went on strike. At the Camaguey Institute classes were reduced to one-third their normal size.²
2. Most members of the militia in Camaguey Province have been sent to the Sierra Escambray area; others have been sent to Oriente Province, where an uprising was reported in Sierra Cristal. The militiamen left for the zone of fighting with little enthusiasm and only because they had no alternative. Someone present at the final training exercise reported that the instructor had said that, once they were on the battlefield, if they were not given enough food for all the men, they were to throw the food away, since all or none should eat. Supplying food to those fighting against the opposition forces in the Escambray is one of the government's biggest problems.
3. Many people in Camaguey believe that the CASTRO regime is tottering and that the situation can at any moment degenerate into bloody anarchy, with consequences that no one can foresee. The opposition forces in the Escambray are enjoying great popularity with the Cuban people, even though their true ideology is not known. These forces do not have a radio station capable of being heard all over Cuba, and all that is generally known about these groups is that they are anti-CASTRO.
4. Many items of food are lacking in Camaguey, and butter is rationed. The price of pigs of any size is double that of normal times. Residents must line up to get small pieces of soap and so-called detergent, which is made up mainly of ashes.

Headquarters Comments

1. There have been no previous reports of open government threats to confiscate private schools or take similar drastic action, although there was considerable speculation by private schools concerning such possible actions.
2. The accuracy of these figures is difficult to judge. Before the scheduled strike was called the government ordered classes dismissed and examinations scheduled. Students were required to report to school only at the times their examinations were scheduled.